

NOTES ON BOOKS.

THE NEW DICTIONARY—MR. JOHN MORLEY
—MR. GLADSTONE—CAPTAIN BURTON.

THE second part of "The New English Dictionary" which Dr. Murray is editing completes the letter "A" and enters upon the letter "B." There has been so long a delay between the issues of the first and second parts that impatient scholars began to think the dictionary would be as slow in finishing as the "Academy." But the Delegates of the "Academy," who are in effect the publishers, now confidently hope that succeeding parts will appear at intervals of six months only. The staff has been greatly enlarged, its headquarters have been removed to Oxford, where the printing is done, and I suppose there is no difficulty about money. In all, there are to be twenty-four parts, and as two have been published, the whole work ought to be completed within eleven years. It is a long time and this is an impatient age, but meanwhile each part is an invaluable addition to the working tools of every student, or of everybody to whose business a full knowledge and accurate use of words are essential.

Dr. Murray's qualifications for the gigantic task he has set himself are of a high order, and the work he has already done is proof enough of his capacity. The specialists in words already in his possession and the knowledge of the dictionary so far as it has gone, if Dr. Murray's discretion were equal to his learning, he would be a model editor; a standard which, indeed, he does not as it is very far from him. It is in too ready admission of doubt, and of words and doubtful authorities that he may be said to err. If this is meant to be a thesaurus of all words which have ever been printed in English type, there is nothing to be said. Dr. Murray's own account of the matter is broad enough to cover any type. The general reader, he observes, will here find the derivation and accepted pronunciation, the past history and present use, of every word which may occur in his reading. He adds, to be sure, a qualification, if it can be called one. He is to find every word which may occur in his reading, and concerning which he may require further information. There are certainly many words which will occur in one's current reading concerning which the dictionary would require no further information.

The new year was marked in Paris literary circles by the appearance of two new illustrated reviews or magazines. One of these, entitled *Les Lettres et les Arts*, is published by Boussod, Valade, & Co., is a monthly, and almost too magnificent for its price of 120 to 150 pages. Each number will contain four or five illustrations of matter in small quarto form, four volumes being issued in the course of the year. It is printed on colored paper with a special type, and is illustrated by colored engravings, etchings, photographs, woodcuts, etc., in the most abundant and at the same time careful manner. Letters and art will divide the space, as a rule, though the science is not to be forgotten nor history and composition ignored, and each month an original article is published. In the list of contributors the names of Academics and members of the Institute are frequent. Of the former, in the first two numbers, we find MM. Edouard Pailleton, E. Caro, Jules Simon, Alexandre Dumas, Maxime du Camp and Francis Coppée. M. Charles Gounod furnishes the music, so far, the contents of the January number are sufficiently good. In the list of contributors are also mentioned the names of the authors of the matter. The standard of the new review, however, is so high (three hundred francs a year without postage) that it would seem difficult to obtain for it more than a limited circulation.

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American readers of Mr. John Morley—and I hope he has many—will be glad to hear that Messrs. Macmillan are publishing a new edition of his collected works, in 8 vols., cloth 8vo, at 5 shillings (\$1.25) each. The series leads off with Voltaire, Rousseau follows, then Diderot, and all of them studies of French literature and of the intellectual movement of the eighteenth century such as do not elsewhere exist in English. Each part, as I think, have gone through several editions, and have been taken their place as classics, and have done much toward liberalizing of the younger English mind which has been visible of late years. The present edition is handy and well printed.

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might bear in mind that cheapness is not every thing. Cheap and nasty is the rule in the book publishing business, and this, if persevered in, can only result in the debasement of literature. If people are to accept their mental and spiritual food in stilted rag shape, they will care less for the profit less by it; and will presently be content that the substance should follow the form. Mr. Matthew Arnold, on this score, on so many other matters, has said the right thing. He protests against a cheap literature, hideous and ignominious, and declares that a sense of beauty and fitness ought to be satisfied in the form and aspect of the books we read, as well as by their contents.

Of Captain Burton's translation of "The Arabian Nights" two volumes have now appeared. Before anything had been seen of them, I gave some account of this scheme, and of the material on which he had worked, and a statement of the reasons which made all existing versions unsatisfactory to the student, and incomplete. Captain Burton saw fit to reprint these desultory paragraphs as a kind of circular or advertisement of his forthcoming book. He did not think it necessary to ask leave to do this, nor did I know to what use my letter had been put till it was too late to object. In any ordinary case it would have been of no consequence, but Captain Burton's version is of such a character that I wish to state the facts, and to say that when I wrote my letter I had never seen a line of his translation, and had no idea that what I said of his plans would be used for the purpose it has been, or for any purpose except to be printed in your columns. As it is, I am made to seem to give some sort of approval to a book which I think offensive, and not only offensive, but grossly and needlessly offensive. If anybody has been induced to subscribe for it by what I wrote, I regret it, and both to him and to myself I write this explanation due.

G. W. S.

LITERARY NOTES.

An English edition of the new *Princeton Review* is to be published in London by Holder and Houghton. The next number, it is said, will contain Mr. Lowell's paper on the poet Gray.

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